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29 JUN 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Contact Lenses for PIC Personnel

Executive Registry

60-51401

1. This memorandum contains a recommendation for action in paragraph 9 for the Acting Director of Central Intelligence.
2. Photographic Intelligence Center is utilizing, to an increasing extent, high magnification optical devices which cannot be operated effectively while the viewer is wearing ordinary eyeglasses. PIC has recommended, therefore, after study of the problem, that it be authorized to purchase contact lenses for certain personnel who are required to wear vision correctives to achieve normal vision and who operate these tubular optical devices in their work. The only alternative to contact lenses would entail the modification of all tubular optical systems requiring a very heavy money outlay and a considerable time loss for engineering and actual modifications.
3. At present there are approximately 20 PIC employees who would be fitted with contact lenses if approval is received. Such lenses cost approximately \$175 per pair for fitting and purchase.
4. If approval is received, Medical Staff is of the opinion that it should retain a continuing control over each case in which such lenses are required. Medical Staff would conduct an initial examination to determine, where possible, whether the individual could wear contact lenses successfully. It would then refer employees it believed had excellent chances of successfully adapting to wearing contact lenses to local optometrists and ophthalmologists.
5. No restrictions would be placed on the employee's wearing the lenses while engaged in other than his official duties since such use would hasten his complete adaption to their continuous use.
6. There appeared to be a sufficient legal question for the Office of General Counsel informally to contact the General Accounting Office and seek its advice. Mr. John Moore of GAO stated, after some research, that he believed there was a reasonable chance the Comptroller General would approve the use of appropriated funds for this purpose. He recommended, therefore, that in advance of any purchase a formal opinion be sought from the Comptroller General as to its legality.
7. The attached letter has been prepared for the Acting Director's signature (as required by law) requesting such an opinion. In addressing the letter separately to the issues of those present employees requiring

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vision correctives and of future employees who might require such, this Office is following Mr. Moore's recommendation, based on the belief that, even if the Comptroller General were to hold in favor of expending appropriated funds for lenses for present employees, it is unlikely he would be able to extend this opinion to include future employees.

8. The problem has been stated in the letter to the Comptroller General in general terms in order to make the correspondence unclassified.

9. It is recommended that the Acting Director of Central Intelligence sign the attached letter to the Comptroller General.

s/ Lawrence R. Houston

LAWRENCE R. HOUSTON
General Counsel

Attachment

CONCURRENCES:

25X1A


Photographic Intelligence Center

JUN 28 1960

Date

Comptroller

Date

Signed

30 JUN 1960

Deputy Director (Support)

Date

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